

REMENDER • CRAIG • BOYD

DEADLY CLASS™



The Story So Far...

When homeless, orphaned, San Franciscan teen Marcus Lopez was asked to join Kings Dominion Atelier of the Deadly Arts, a shadowy school specializing in training the next generation of the world's deadliest assassins, he expected trouble wouldn't be far behind. But he had no idea.

Naturally distrusting, Marcus had trouble fitting into his new surroundings. But in time, he made a small circle of friends: Saya, a Yakuza's raven-haired daughter; Willie, a young gangbanger from LA; Billy, a quick-witted punk; and Petra, a gloomy Goth girl.

While Saya and Willie hail from long-standing underworld dynasties, Marcus, Billy, and Petra all joined the academy as street kids, collectively called “rats” by their fellow classmates. They are unaffiliated with any established criminal empire.

Distracted by the life-and-death day to day of his school, as well as a string of unhappy romances and a deep, dark stint with drug addiction, Marcus never thought too much about this...until the Freshman Finals Massacre, when Headmaster Lin turned the legacy students loose on the rats, ordering them to kill them all to secure a passing grade.

Though Marcus barely escaped with his life, his friends were not so lucky. Both Willie and Billy succumbed to the frenzy of the finals.

Now, over a year later, a new group of freshmen have been tasked with bringing Marcus and Maria back to school. Beyond all odds, they have found them, alive and well and wanting nothing more than to leave Kings Dominion behind them forever...

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DEADLY CLASS created by
Rick Remender & Wes Craig

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MARCUS: EVERYONE
HE LOVES DIES.



DAYS FLIP BY LIKE AN OLD
CALENDAR IN A BLACK
AND WHITE MONTAGE.



THE TIME PASSING TOO QUICKLY.

YOU WERE FRANTIC AND FEARFUL.

MISSING IT ALL.

COLLAPSING
INWARD.

BUT IT
DOESN'T
MATTER.

IT ISN'T GOING
TO CHANGE.



THE CURRENT IS TOO STRONG.

AND YOU CARE.

AND YOU KNOW WHAT
HAPPENS WHEN YOU CARE.



WHEN YOU STAND
UP AND FIGHT.

WHEN YOU RAGE
AT THE INVISIBLE
HANDS--

YOU MAKE
YOURSELF AN
EASY MARK.



YOU CREATE YOUR GREATEST,
MOST EXPLOITABLE WEAKNESS.

AND IT'S COZY.

YOU'RE RIGHT
AT HOME IN IT.

MARRIED TO THE VULNERABILITY.

FUMBLING AT DREAMS
OF A BETTER WORLD.

BURIED IN BONES BUT
YOU STILL IGNORE
THE HEADLINE:

THE JACKALS
ARE REAL.

HAPPY ENDINGS
ARE FICTION.

REALITY IS A SICKLY OLD
WOMAN IN A STODGY,
COLD HOUSE--

--EVERYONE SHE EVER
KNEW IS DEAD--

--LONG GONE.

REALITY IS
HOW MUCH
YOU MISS
YOUR OLD
LIFE.

AND AN ENDLESS INABILITY TO
UNDERSTAND THE PRESENT.

A HARD FOCUS ON THE PEOPLE
YOU LOVED, HOW FAR GONE
THEY ARE NOW...



...AND HOW MUCH YOU MISS THEM.

DON'T
RECOGNIZE
MYSELF...



TAKE
SHELTER
FROM THE
FALLOUT.

THE
ILLUSION
OF SAFETY
INSIDE A
MOB.

CAREFUL
THOUGH...

YOU MIGHT
ACTUALLY
HAVE TO
DO THOSE
THINGS YOU'VE
SET YOUR
HEART ON.



HOW MUCH
DOES THAT
CHOICE
COST?



ALL I WANTED WAS SOMEONE TO SIT
BACK AND HATE THE WORLD WITH ME.



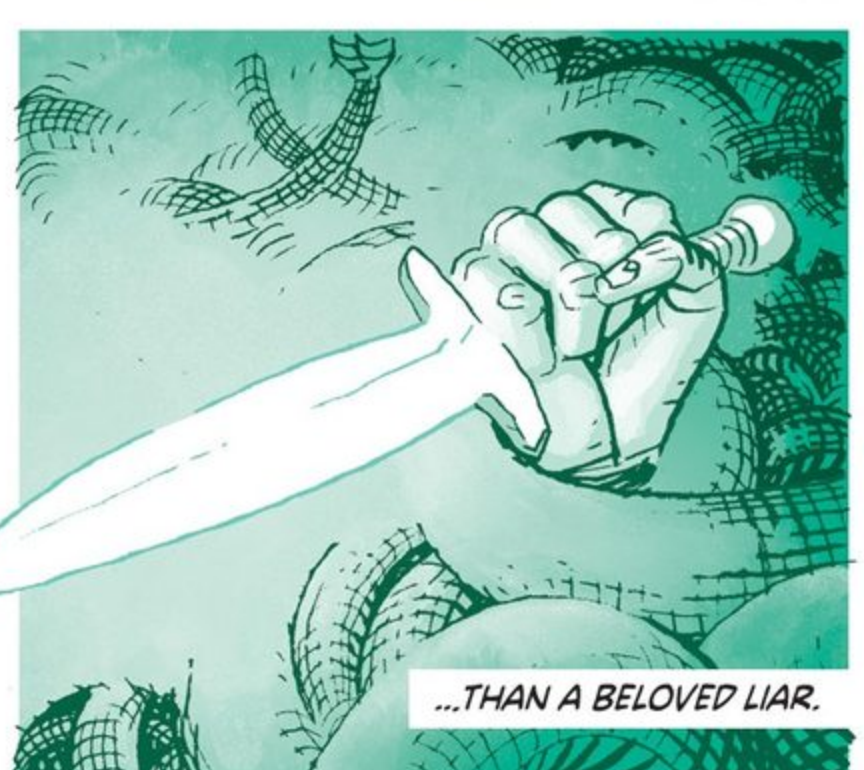
INSTEAD I'M SURROUNDED
BY PEOPLE WHO DECEIVE
THEMSELVES AND POSE
AND POLITIC.



AND SOME
PART OF ME
THINKS I
SHOULD BE
MORE LIKE
THEM.



BUT I'D
RATHER BE
AN HONEST
ASSHOLE...



...THAN A BELOVED LIAR.



I WON'T
BE LIKE
YOU!

SELL IT.

WON'T JOIN
IN OR BE
COMPLICIT!

IF YOU SAY IT LOUD ENOUGH,
YOU'LL BELIEVE IT, RIGHT?



FAKE IT.

CLIMB.

QUICKLY.



THERE ARE REAL LEVELS
BENEATH THE SURFACE
STILL.

CLIMB UP.



PLACES YOU **DON'T** WANT TO GO.
CLIMB.



ALL THE LAYERS YOU LOOK AT ARE
DISTRACTIONS FROM THE TRUTH.



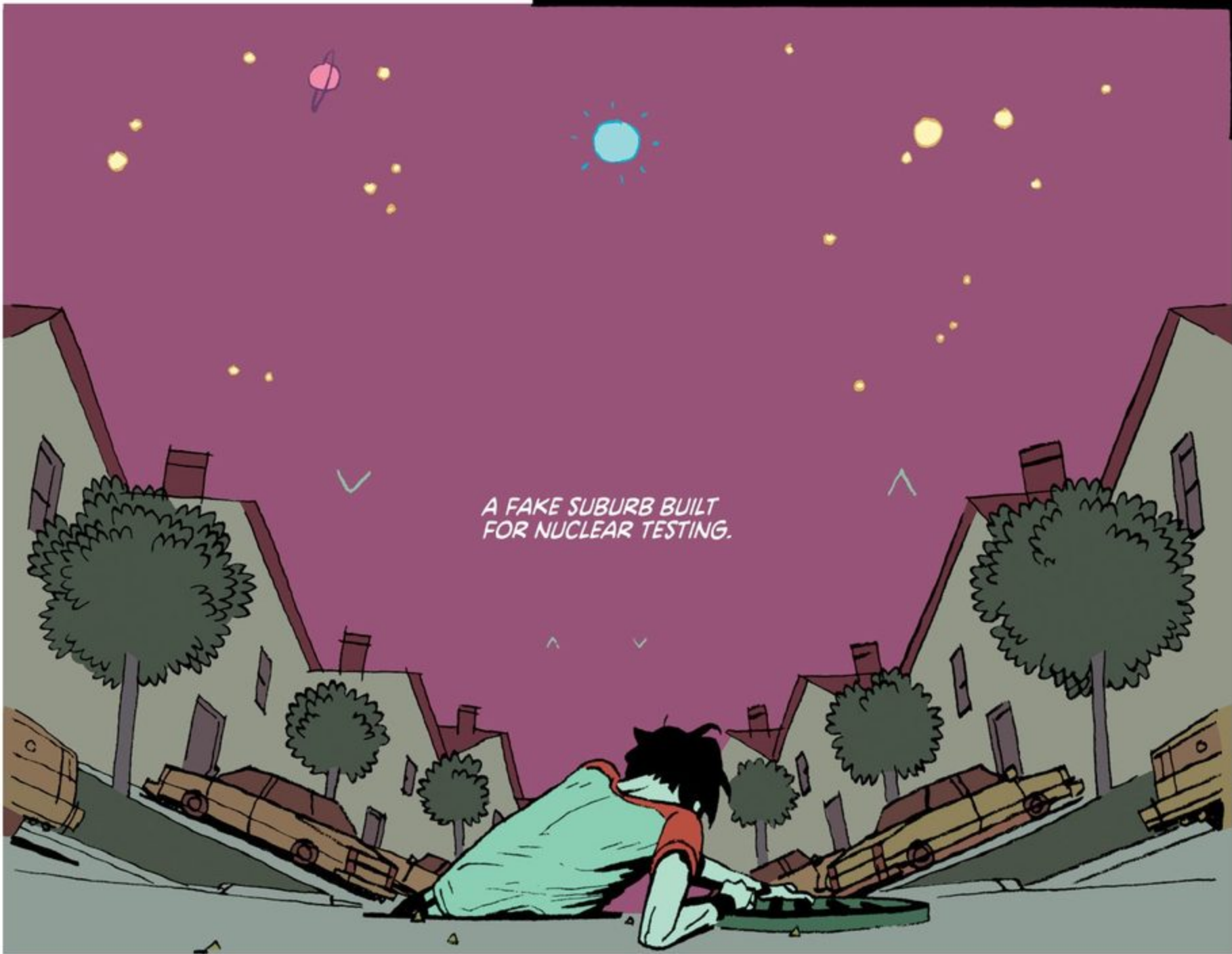
PAINTED TUNNELS.
CLIMB.



FALSE DOORS.

MANNEQUIN PROPS.

EVERYTHING YOU
THINK YOU KNOW
ABOUT YOURSELF:



A FAKE SUBURB BUILT
FOR NUCLEAR TESTING.



--THE MORE
DUST YOU
INHALE INTO
YOUR
LUNGS.

BILLY?!
THANK GOD!
I THOUGHT
YOU WERE--

I'M NOT
ALLOWED TO
SPEAK
DIRECTLY TO
YOU.

I MISS
DIRECT
CONTACT...

YOU ARE
INTENDED TO
HEAR ME
THROUGH OTHER
CHANNELS.

BUT IT'S
EASIER THIS
WAY.
CLEANER.

EVERYONE'S
GIVING UP--
GROWING
SCALES AND
EATING EACH
OTHER.

CAN'T CLIMB
THE LADDER
UNLESS YOU'RE
A SOCIOPATH.



THE
LADDER IS
MADE OF
HUMANS.

THINK
ABOUT
IT--

--THERE ARE
BETTER WAYS
TO USE YOUR
TEETH.



IT'S WAY
TOO LATE
FOR ME.

BUT THEY
CAN'T
WIN,
MARCUS.

IT'S UP
TO YOU,
DUDE...



"BUT YOU
GOTTA
HURRY.

"THEY'RE
VERY
PERSUASIVE."



OR GET YOURSELF BACK ON TRACK.

SO BUSY REACTING YOU AIN'T HAD A MINUTE TO MAKE A *SINGLE* CHOICE FOR YOURSELF.

YOU AND MARIA MADE IT OUT.

YOU GOT A *BIG* RESPONSIBILITY TO THE REST OF US WHO DIDN'T.



YOU WERE THE ONLY FRIENDS I EVER HAD. HOW DO I START OVER, HOW DO I--

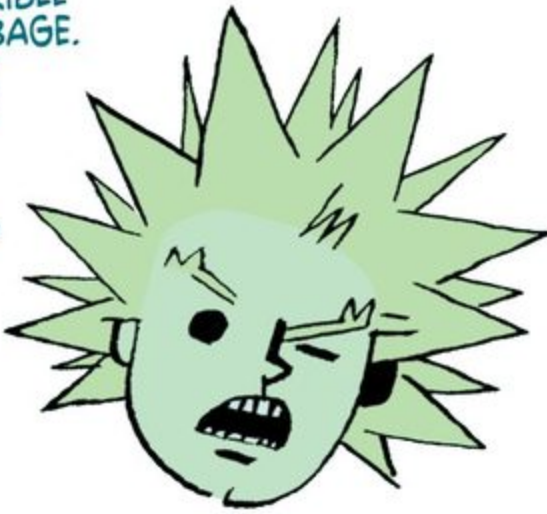


SOME PEOPLE CAN NEVER BE CONTENT.

YOU FUCKING RAGS ARE RUINING MY FUN.

IS THIS FUN?

LISTEN, MARCUS, PAL-- WE ALL HAVE, OR HAD, LIVES FULL OF TERRIBLE GARBAGE.



AND YOU GOT THE BIG SOLUTION, LEX?



THE SOLUTION IS *SIMPLE*: FORWARD PROGRESSION, SLAG.



CHOOSE TO LAUGH AT TRAGEDY. TO MOCK IT KNOWING ONE VERSION OF IT WILL BEFALL YOU EVENTUALLY.



IT'S JUST THAT SIMPLE, HUH?



THE JOY, CLICHÉD AS IT IS, COMES WHEN YOU NEVER STOP LOOKING FOR IT.

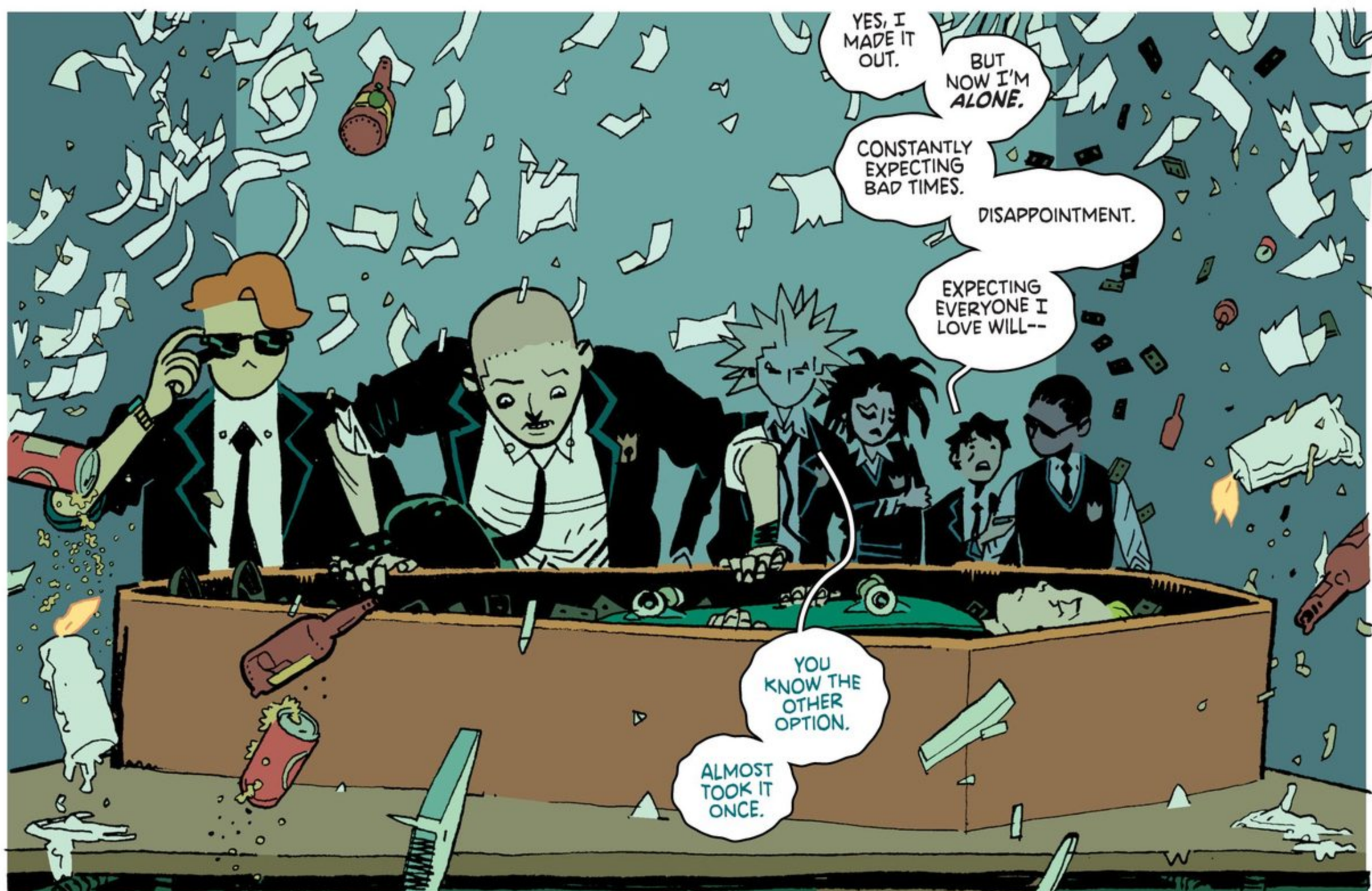
DON'T FORGET WHY YOU'RE HERE. WHY YOU LET ME DIE.



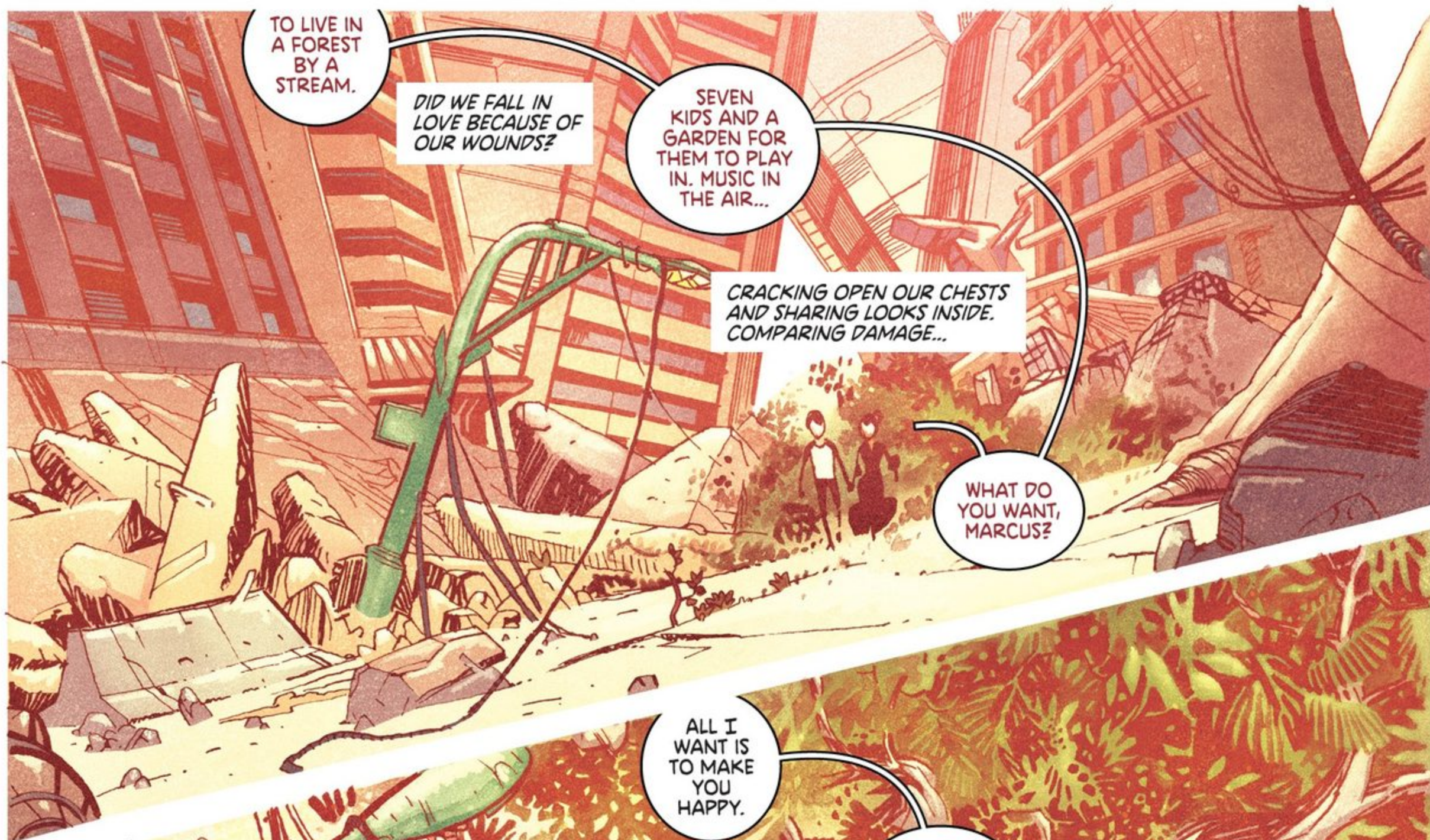
THAT'S NOT TRUE... I DIDN'T--



THE TURBINES HAVE NEEDS.







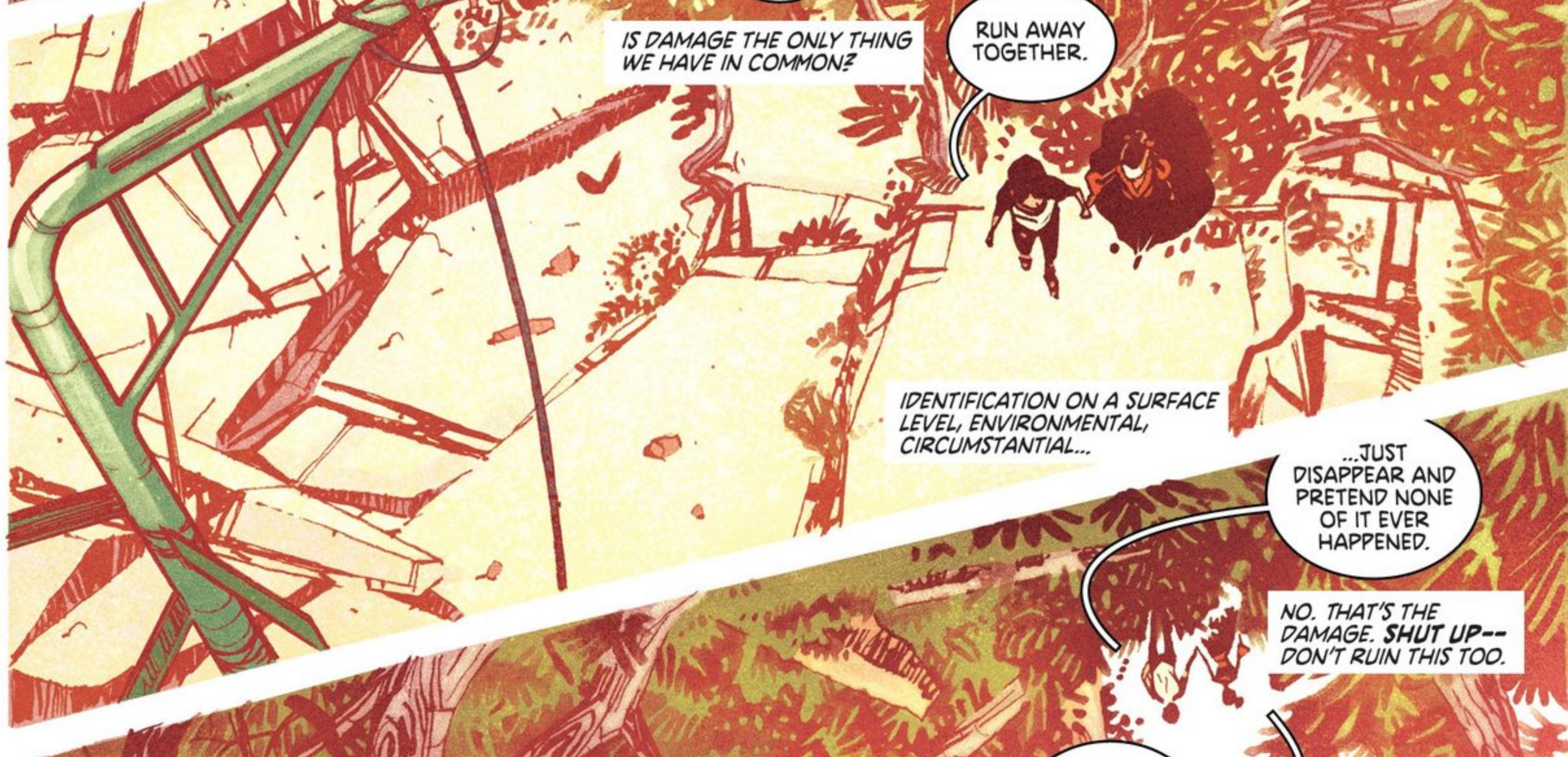
TO LIVE IN
A FOREST
BY A
STREAM.

DID WE FALL IN
LOVE BECAUSE OF
OUR WOUNDS?

SEVEN
KIDS AND A
GARDEN FOR
THEM TO PLAY
IN. MUSIC IN
THE AIR...

CRACKING OPEN OUR CHESTS
AND SHARING LOOKS INSIDE.
COMPARING DAMAGE...

WHAT DO
YOU WANT,
MARCUS?



ALL I
WANT IS
TO MAKE
YOU
HAPPY.

IS DAMAGE THE ONLY THING
WE HAVE IN COMMON?

RUN AWAY
TOGETHER.

IDENTIFICATION ON A SURFACE
LEVEL, ENVIRONMENTAL,
CIRCUMSTANTIAL...

...JUST
DISAPPEAR AND
PRETEND NONE
OF IT EVER
HAPPENED.

NO. THAT'S THE
DAMAGE. **SHUT UP--**
DON'T RUIN THIS TOO.



SHE LOVES YOU. TAKES CARE OF
YOU. KILLED CHICO FOR YOU.

SHE'S THE ONLY GOOD
THING IN YOUR LIFE--

I WANT TO
GIVE YOU
EVERYTHING
YOU
DESERVE.

THE ONLY REASON
YOU HAVE TO LIVE IT.

STILL...

TRACING
THE ORIGINS OF
ONE'S MOTIVATION
IS NOT A
DIFFICULT
TASK.

WHEN YOU HAVE TO TELL YOURSELF YOU
LOVE SOMEONE OVER AND OVER, WELL...

YOU'RE
EITHER
LYING TO
ME...

...OR
YOU'RE
LYING TO
YOURSELF.



SHE'S THE EXACT OPPOSITE OF SAYA.



I DON'T
KNOW
WHAT I
WANT.

SAYA: A
TORRENT
OF CHAOS.



I DON'T
KNOW
WHAT I
NEED!



I DO.



YOU NEED
SOMEONE TO
JUDGE YOU THE
WAY YOU
JUDGE
EVERYONE
ELSE.

HELMUT: HAD TRUE
LOVE, LOST IT.



THE
WAY YOU
JUDGED
PETRA!

LIE TO
YOURSELF
BUT WE KNOW
THE TRUTH--
YOU LET
HER DIE.

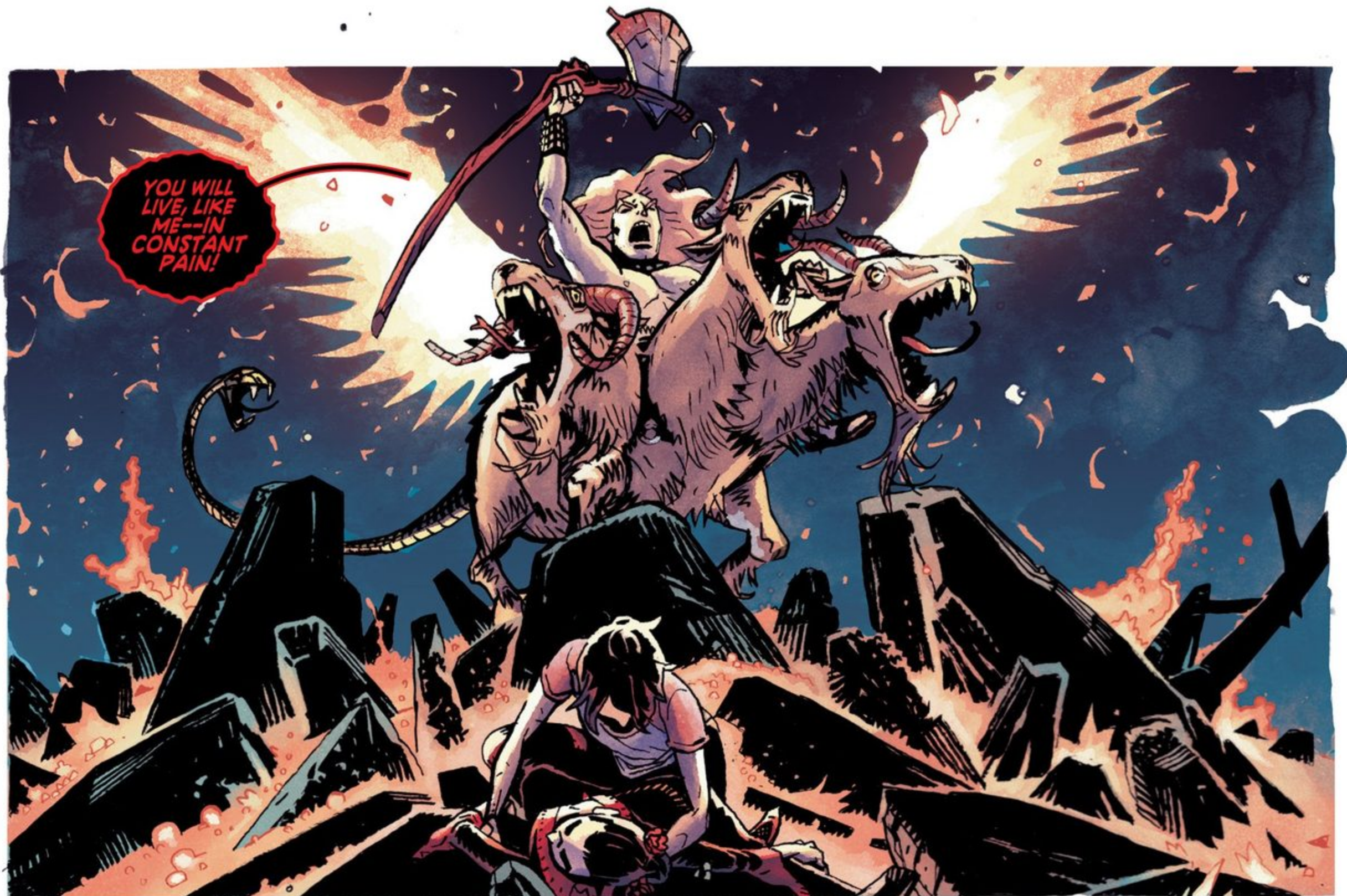
TOOK
HER
FROM
ME!



SET IN
MOTION MY
VENGEANCE--
FORCED ME
TO TAKE
MARIA FROM
YOU!



NOOO--!





she deserves better.





maria...
she
will...

BURN IN
ANGUISH
FOR HER
SINS.

THE
BLOOD ON
THAT BITCH'S
HANDS--



THE
SUFFERING
YOUR CHERISHED
WHORE
CAUSED--



MARIA'S
GOING EXACTLY
WHERE SHE
FUCKING
BELONGS.

EVERYTHING
JUST AS YOU
IMAGINED IT.

THEY'RE ALL GONE.

THERE'LL BE NO YOU
LEFT TO IDENTIFY.



YOU USED TO THINK THE SOLUTION
WAS TO SHOVEL YOUR GUTS OUT
IN FRONT OF EVERYONE.

CALL IN OTHER WOUNDED
VETS TO COMMISERATE.

AS IF YOUR PAIN EARNED YOU
SOME **SPECIAL** TREATMENT.

BUT, THEY EITHER **DIED** FROM
EXPOSURE OR THEY BIT YOU.



WHAT'S LEFT...? START OVER?

TELL YOURSELF IT'LL BE
DIFFERENT NEXT TIME?

THE NEXT BATCH WILL
BE MORE CIVIL?



OR ACCEPT
YOU WERE
WRONG.



ACCEPT **THEIR** WAY
OF DOING THINGS.

NOT JUST BECOME
LIKE THEM--



BECOME THE **WORST** OF THEM.

THE LAST THING I
REMEMBER, MY MOM
PICKED ME UP FROM
THE DOCTOR'S
OFFICE.



SHE KNEW EVERYTHING
I'D BEEN UP TO, BUT SHE
WASN'T UPSET WITH ME.

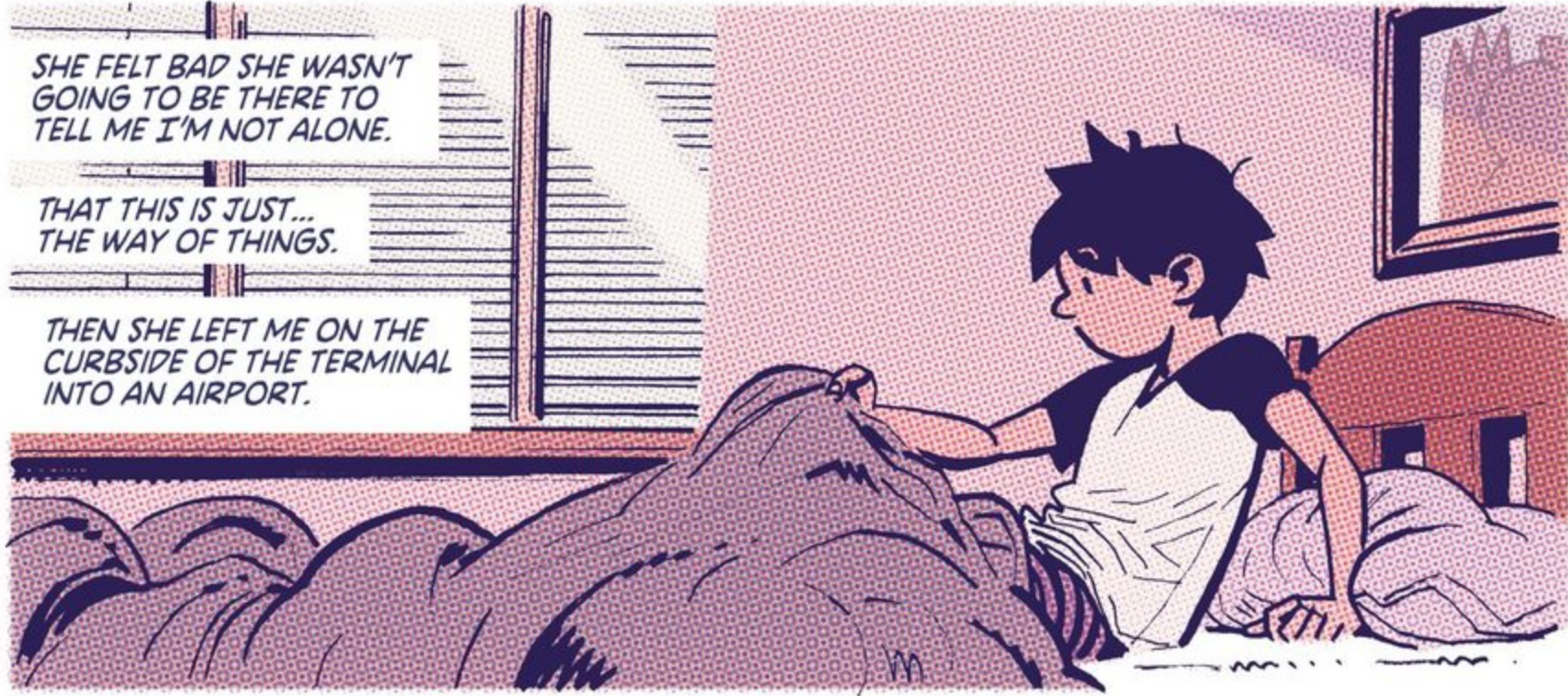
SHE TOLD ME
SHE'D GONE
THROUGH STUFF
LIKE THIS, TOO.



SHE FELT BAD SHE WASN'T
GOING TO BE THERE TO
TELL ME I'M NOT ALONE.

THAT THIS IS JUST...
THE WAY OF THINGS.

THEN SHE LEFT ME ON THE
CURBSIDE OF THE TERMINAL
INTO AN AIRPORT.



SHE GAVE ME A
KISS GOODBYE
AND TOLD ME:



"JUST BECAUSE NOBODY ELSE CONGRATULATES
YOU FOR IT, DOESN'T MAKE DOING THE **RIGHT**
THING **LESS** VALUABLE.



"DON'T BE
OVERCOME
BY EVIL....

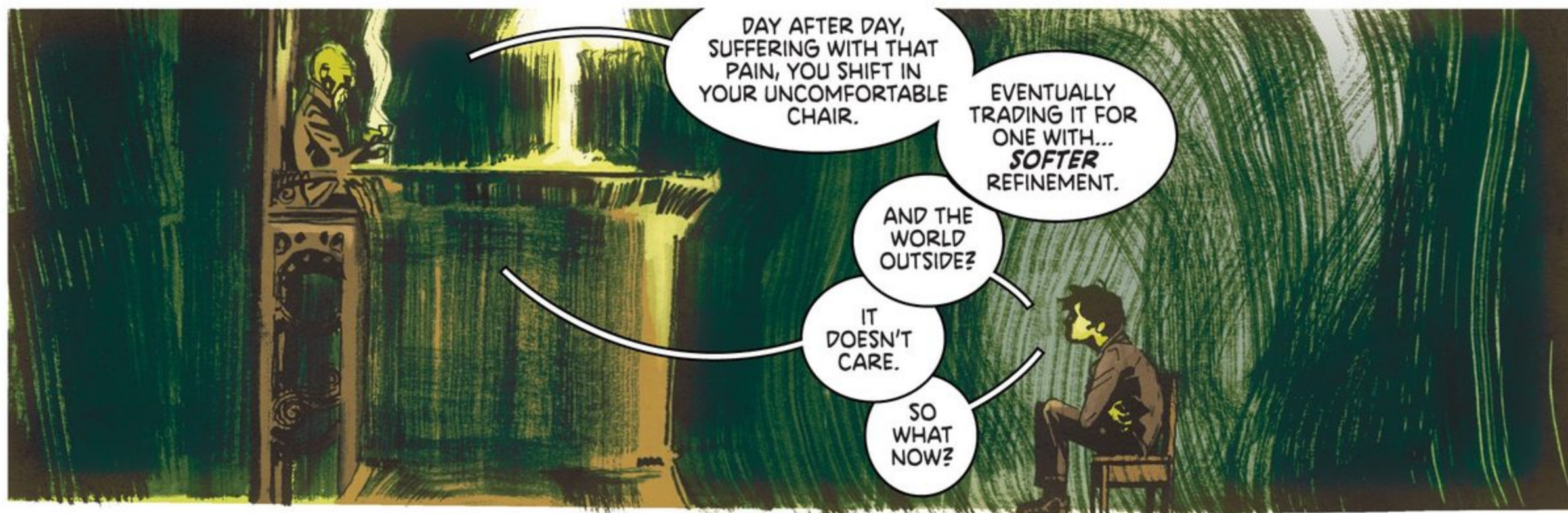
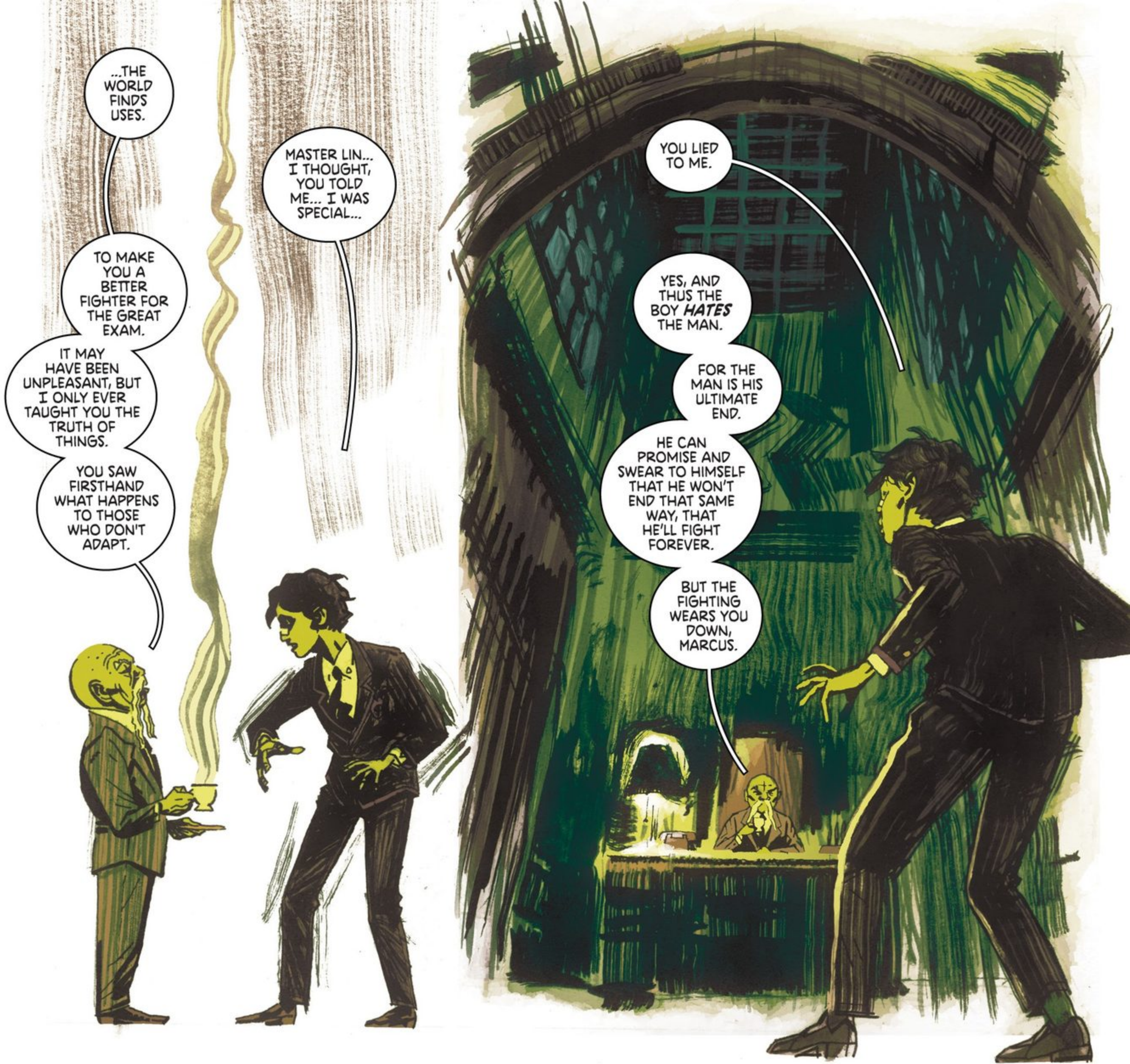


"...BUT OVERCOME
EVIL WITH GOOD."



THERE
HE IS.







YOU
FOCUSED ON
REAGAN.

ON
UNOBTAINABLE
GOALS.

YOU GAVE
UP BEFORE
YOU
BEGAN.



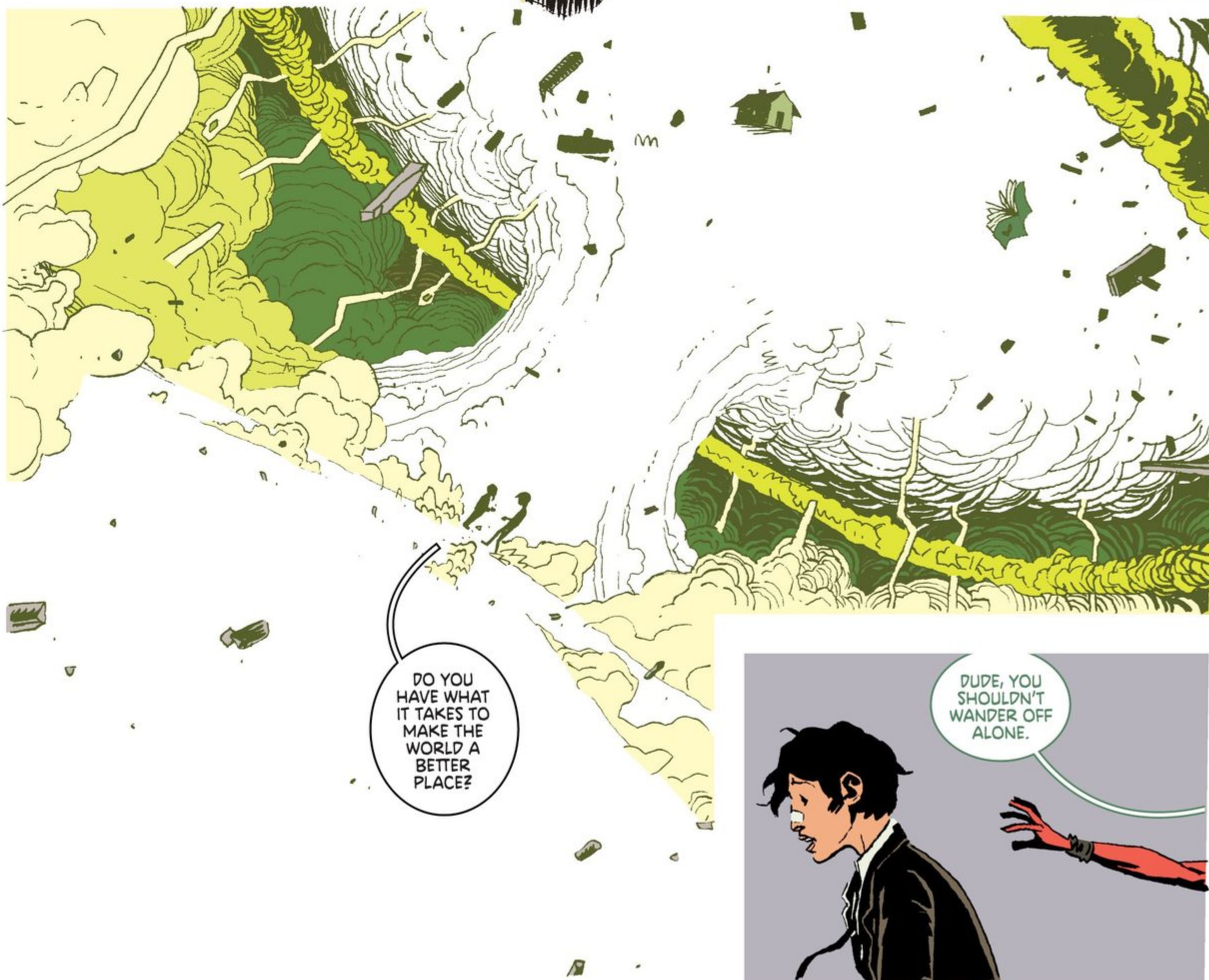
SO DESPERATE
FOR A FATHER
FIGURE TO GUIDE
YOU, YOU'D HAVE
TRUSTED
ANYONE.

SO
NEEDY AND
INSECURE--
INCAPABLE OF
FOLLOWING
YOUR OWN
ADVICE.



YOU
ALWAYS
NEEDED
SOMEONE ELSE
TO TELL YOU
WHICH WAY
TO GO.

BUT
NOW THAT
YOU'RE ALONE
YOU MUST
DECIDE FOR
YOURSELF...



DO YOU
HAVE WHAT
IT TAKES TO
MAKE THE
WORLD A
BETTER
PLACE?

DUDE, YOU
SHOULDN'T
WANDER OFF
ALONE.







TO BE CONTINUED...

DEAD LETTER OFFICE

Send comments and questions to
[WriteRemender@gmail.com!](mailto:WriteRemender@gmail.com)
Mark letters "OK to print".

Welcome back. It's been a while since we've seen each other. 2018 was some kind of whirlwind. I spent the past two years grinding myself to dust trying to get the DEADLY CLASS television show greenlit, and if I'm honest, I never thought it would be. I'm a pessimist by nature--that's probably surprising to you if you've read any of my work. No, obviously I'm a pessimist, and as such, I always enter into these sorts of endeavors thinking: give it everything you've got but expect nothing. It helps to mitigate any disappointment down the road. In theory, anyway.

However, in this case, the show did get picked up. So not only did I successfully sell the show and get the pilot picked up, but I also got the first season picked up, at which point I agreed to serve as showrunner on it. Now, I'd done the equivalent of that job in animation and figured, "How hard could it be?" It turns out it can be very hard.

As the lead creative on the show, it fell on me to run the writers room, break every story, and either write or rewrite every script to maintain the voice. And that's not including any of the many months I've spent in Vancouver on set or any of the production or post-production work. That plus doing all the comics and other secret projects... 2018 nearly killed me.

Now, as far as I know, no one has ever taken their comic property this far and then served as showrunner for it. Along the way, I had a few in-the-know people tell me that it would kill me and perhaps I should rethink it. So why

did I do it? Why did I work seven days a week, fifteen hours a day, and grind myself up? I did it because I truly love this project. It's filled up with so many personal stories hidden inside the fictions, how could I let it be translated by anyone else? It was important to me that the intention and integrity of what Wes and I have created here continue to the television show. And that any new stories, developments, or unpacking of previously existing stories be handled in the same way that the books are handled.

I can confidently tell you the DEADLY CLASS TV show is a pure extension of the book. You can see for yourself as the pilot airs tonight, January 16, at 10 pm/9 pm CST on SyFy. The entire series is drenched in the same love and care that the comic book is and is overseen by yours truly. And I couldn't be more excited for you to see it. It's been a lot of fun, and incredible incredibly arduous, to dive back into the early stories and rethink them for live action. Even more fun though was adding new stories, new chapters, with that original cast, dancing in between the stories that we told in the book. I think we did a good job showing new sides of all of the characters as well as Kings itself, and I can't wait to hear what you think about it.

But you just read issue 36, so you're caught up with the current ongoing adventures of Marcus and his friends. And if you thought the trials and tribulations of the past were intense, wait until you see what we have cooked up moving forward. Of course, I can't go into details about what Wes and I have planned for the next

ten issues, but I can tell you... well, nothing really. So why don't I quit wasting your time?

Let's get to a couple of letters and then look at some of the amazing fan art we've been receiving. We received so much we'll be filling the back of the comics with fan art moving forward. Keep sending it in, and we'll print everything eventually...

Dear Rick,

I've been into the whole DEADLY CLASS schizzle since I saw it at the back of a Black Science issue. Since then, it gave me a sense of a "quiet" stress reliever when I was making out of the whole 12th grade Senior High school shitstorms. On one occasion my Issue #18 was confiscated. IT BLOWS! I had to buy one again soon later after.

Reading issues that had the 80's vibes, comic books, NWA, Frank Miller ninjas, and the dropsy High School rejects struck a deal to go on my own shit. Never minding prep boys or those sleazy dicks. I got a good comic book to pass the time.

As of now, I have your complete volumes in my box, next to my dad's Vinyl collection.

Keep writing DEADLY CLASS, cause GOD! I hope it never ends.

from
CHEN

PS It might end somehow, but it's up to you.

PPS Is Viktor going good?

It's nice to know that our book offered you some respite from your teenage misadventures.

THE DEADLY ARTS

We welcome your fanart! Send them with the email marked "OK TO PRINT" to: WriteRemender@gmail.com.

I very much like the idea that an issue of DC got confiscated. Very fitting. As for the ending of the series, while we do have ideas for it, I don't think we're anywhere near it right now. We plan on bringing you many more issues. And speaking to your other question, whatever Viktor is up to, you're going to have to wait to find out.

Hi Rick,

I was that kind of person who hated comic books: just short dialogues that aren't enough to tell a whole story and they are all about superheroes and boring superhero stories. I thought that until I discovered DEADLY CLASS.

I don't have anything against superheroes. I love watching all these new films that are coming out. But when I opened a comic book to read one of their stories I couldn't move on to the next page. I found that so boring. "Pew pew, let's save the world. We're the best!" From that day on I stereotyped all the comic books. In my mind, they were all the same. It was one of my biggest mistakes. I shouldn't have done that.

Then came DEADLY CLASS. I watched the trailer and thought "that's going to be one of the best series of 2019," and I found out it was based on a graphic novel. That caught my eye. So they are not all about superheroes! When I finished the first issue, I started the second then the third and so on. In one week I had read all the published issues! I'm feeling so connected to the characters. They all have a fucked up past and each bringing that up in their own way and having to learn how to live with that it helps me live with me fucked up past. We

try to run away from it, but it's never going to leave us.

It doesn't matter how fucked up things once were in our lives we can't forget them because they are part of our lives and will keep haunting us. We just need to make sure we're never caught. We gotta hold our ground and fight our demons. DEADLY CLASS helped me find my strength to fight my demons and keep living. Thank you.

Nicole,
Brazil

Few things make me happier than disillusioning people as to what comic books as a medium can be. Second to that is having a genuine emotional connection with the reader. I feel like stories, when they're doing their job right, offer identification that makes us feel that we're not alone. The best ones reflect parts of ourselves that we weren't aware of, dark desires, secret fears, or happier attributes that seem so specific we can forget that other people experience the same things. My favorite books, TV shows, and movies have some part of me in them... some identifiable thing that makes me feel like I'm not alone. So thank you for writing to let us know we've accomplished that.

That's it for this month. As crazy as it is to say it, while you're waiting for the next issue, you have FOUR EPISODES of the DEADLY CLASS TV show to watch. Write to us here, and we'll print your letters and thoughts, and I'll do my best to respond to all of them.

Till then,
Rick



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NEXT ISSUE

